

WE CLAIM:

1. A computer system for providing localized application data to computing devices linked to a data communications network, comprising:

5 a client device linked to the communications network
including a running application, an administrative interface in communication with the application and the communications network, and a local memory for storing localized application values used by the application; and
10 an application value repository linked to the communications network for storing localized application values used by the computing devices;

15 wherein the administrative interface is operable to receive a request from the application for application values and to respond by selectively retrieving the localized application values corresponding to the request from the local memory and the application value repository.

2. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the client device further includes an update mechanism operable to monitor the localized application values at the application value repository and to update the 5 localized application values in the local memory.

3. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the localized application values stored in the local memory are selected based on prior requests from the application and are removed from the local memory when a last 5 accessed time parameter indicates a period of inactivity has been exceeded.

4. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the client device further includes a mechanism operable to generate a localized eXtensible Markup Language (XML)

file comprising at least a portion of the localized
5 application values.

5. The computer system of claim 4, wherein the application value repository further stores a stylesheet that is adapted for combining with the XML file to produce a localized stylesheet.

6. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the application localized values stored in the application value repository include property values.

7. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the localized application values include user roles indicating data access levels for users of the application, the user roles being localized to allow
5 variation based on geographical locations selected by the users of the application and being used by the administrative interface in the selective retrieving of the localized application values.

8. The computer system of claim 1, further comprising a second client device linked to the communications network running the application, wherein users of the second client device select different
5 geographical areas than the client device and wherein the localized application values retrieved by the second client device from the application value repository differ from the localized application values retrieved by the client device based on the different geographical
10 areas.

9. A method in a computer system for controlling generation of and access to localized application data, comprising:

receiving a request for application data from an
5 application;
determining if localized application values
corresponding to the request are present in local memory
of the computer system;
when determined present, retrieving the localized
10 application values from the local memory;
when determined not present, retrieving the
localized application values from an application value
repository; and
returning retrieved localized application values to
15 the application.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the request
includes an application name, a geographical area code, a
language code, and at least one element name which are
used in the retrieving steps to provide localized
5 application values matching the geographical area code
and the language code.

11. The method of claim 9, further comprising when
not present, creating an empty data structure, populating
the data structure with the localized application values
from the repository, and storing the populated data
5 structure in the local memory.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the data
structure includes a list of element values appropriate
for application name, geographical area, and language
information provided in the request.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the populating
includes obtaining a geographical hierarchy from the
repository and checking nodes in the geographical
hierarchy for the listed element values beginning at a
5 node corresponding to the supplied geographical area and

language information and moving upward to and ending at a top node.

14. The method of claim 9, further including updating the localized application values in the local memory to reflect modifications to the localized application variables in the application value repository.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the updating is performed at a time when the updating is determined to not affect performance of the application as perceived by a user of the application.

16. The method of claim 9, further including constructing a data structure from the retrieved localized application values and storing the constructed data structure.

17. The method of claim 16, further including monitoring for changes in the localized application values corresponding to the retrieved localized application values and repeating the constructing after a change is identified in the monitoring to create a refreshed data structure.

18. An interface for providing localized data to an application operating on a computer system, the interface comprising computer readable program code devices for:

receiving a request for application data from an application;

determining if localized application values corresponding to the request are present in a cache structure of the computer system;

when determined present, retrieving the localized application values from the cache;

when determined not present, retrieving the localized application values from an application value repository; and

15 returning retrieved localized application values to the application.

19. A computer readable medium containing a data structure for storing and providing current localized application values to one or more applications running in a geographically disburse computer network, the data
5 structure comprising:

an application cache storing application combinations representing each combination of names of the running applications, geographical areas utilized in the computer network, and codes identifying languages
10 supported within the computer network; and

an element value cache storing element values comprising localized application values required by the running applications.

20. The data structure of claim 19, wherein each of the element values comprises a localized value for a node in a tree structure in which each of the nodes corresponds to a combination of a geographical area, a
5 supported language, and a staged or released value.

21. The data structure of claim 20, further including an application user cache storing user roles that indicate for users of the applications the localized application values the users can access based on the
5 staged or released value.